

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of the application are respectfully requested in view of the amendments and remarks herewith, which place the application into condition for allowance. The present amendment is being made to facilitate prosecution of the application.

I. STATUS OF THE CLAIMS AND FORMAL MATTERS

Claims 19, 21-23 and 25-29 are currently pending. Claims 27-29 are hereby added. Claims 20 and 24 are hereby canceled. Claims 19 and 23 are independent. Claims 19, 21, 23, 25 and 26 are hereby amended. No new matter has been introduced. Support for this amendment is provided throughout the Specification as originally filed.

Changes to the claims are not made for the purpose of patentability within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §101, §102, §103, or §112. Rather, these changes are made simply for clarification and to round out the scope of protection to which Applicants are entitled.

II. ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Applicant thanks the Examiner for noting that claims 20-22 and 24-26 recited allowable subject matter.

III. REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 19 and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,467,135 to Yamane et al. (hereinafter, merely Yamane).

Claim 19 has been amended herein to recite the limitation of allowable claim 20.

Claim 23 has been amended herein to recite the limitation of allowable claim 24.

Thus, independent claims 19 and 23 have been put in condition for allowance.

Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the §102(e) rejection of claims 19 and 23.

IV. NEW CLAIMS

Claims 27-29 have been added. These claims correspond to allowable claims 19, 21 and 22, respectively, and have been written in “non-means” form.

Claims 27-29 are believed patentable for substantially the same reasons as claims 19, 21 and 23.

V. MISCELLANEOUS

Claims 21, 25 and 26 have been amended to correct their respective dependencies.

VI. DEPENDENT CLAIMS

The other claims are dependent from one of the claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

Claims 19, 21-23 and 25-29 are in condition for allowance. In the event the Examiner disagrees with any of statements appearing above with respect to the disclosure in the cited reference, or references, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner specifically indicate those portions of the reference, or references, providing the basis for a contrary view.

Please charge any additional fees that may be needed, and credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 50-0320.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is believed that all of the claims in this application are patentable and Applicants respectfully request early passage to issue of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

FROMMER LAWRENCE & HAUG LLP
Attorneys for Applicants

By: 

Paul A. Levy
Reg. No. 45,748
(212) 588-0800